

The Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB)

Report of the Library Advisory Committee Presentations Winter 2007-Spring 2008

and

Library Board/LAC Annual Meeting June 14, 2008

Montgomery County Public Libraries (Maryland, USA) Published December, 2008



Report of the Library Advisory Committee Presentations, Winter 2007-Spring 2008 and Library Board/LAC Annual Meeting, June 14, 2008

Montgomery County Public Libraries (Maryland, USA)

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Published January, 2009

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Introduction

The Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB) (Maryland, USA) was established on May 31, 1950 and authorized by Montgomery County Code governing the Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL). According to Montgomery County Code, the Board is established as an advisory board, but it has authority on its own motion, or on reference from the County Executive, to inquire into matters affecting the County public library system and to provide guidance and advice on a wide range of library matters. Such matters include the acquisition, need for, and location of new library facilities, the adequacy and quality of book and materials collections, library policies and practices, MCPL's capital and operating budgets, services to outlying districts and personnel needs of MCPL. The Board usually makes recommendations on these issues to the County Executive through the MCPL Director.

The Library Board serves as one of the advocacy groups for public libraries in Montgomery County on both local and statewide levels and is the voice of the community on library issues in the county. Even though individual Board members may use specific library facilities, the Board members' mission is to be an advocate for all libraries County-wide. Shortly after the establishment of the MCPL Board, the Board created subcommittees to serve as advocates for library patrons called Library Advisory Committees (LACs).

The purpose of the Library Board is to:

- Enhance public recognition and acknowledgment of libraries as educational institutions
- Improve library services and facilities
- Ensure quantity and quality of print and other materials in the collection
- Expand and improve user-friendly technologies at local libraries
- Maintain effective interaction between the Board and Library Advisory Committees
- Increase visibility for public library service in Montgomery County
- Involve volunteers in the public library system

In Fall 2007, the MCPLB initiated a project to hear from all 22 LACs with regards to their perceived strengths of and concerns for the LACs and overarching MCPL system. The MCPLB developed and sent a data collection instrument to each LAC as a guideline for LAC presentations at an official MCPLB meeting. The analysis of the data from the presentations, findings, and proposed strategies are described in the first part of this document, *Report of the Library Advisory Committee Presentations, Winter 2007-Spring 2008.*

In Spring 2008, the MCPLB initiated the first Annual MCPLB/LAC Meeting to discuss the Report and offer workshops to address several of the strategies. See the second part of this document *Library Board/LAC Annual Meeting, June 14*, 2008.

The long term goals of this evolving project are to improve the communication between and efficacy of the MCLB and LACs through:

- Continuation of the Annual Meeting
- Developing strategies to address findings and implement recommendations
- Evaluating progress and performing outcome analysis on an annual basis

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Summary of June 2008 Annual Meeting of the Montgomery County Library Board and Library Advisory Committees January 5, 2008

B. Krantz, Montgomery County Library Board

Purpose

Provide a summary of the June 2008 meeting between the Montgomery County Library Board and Library Advisory Committees. This summary will also provide lists of best practices, lessons learned, and suggested action items that resulted from the general meeting as well as the break-out sessions. Finally, feedback regarding the efficacy of the meeting itself will be presented.

Executive Summary

The first annual meeting between the Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB) and Library Advisory Committees (LACs) was held on June 14, 2008. The primary focus of the meeting was to address LAC concerns raised during the previous year and provide an atmosphere amenable to collaborative problem solving in order to bolster the health and effectiveness of the Board/LAC network. The meeting featured a keynote address from Catherine Leggett, Senior Vice President, ICMA-RC. Additionally, meeting attendees were able to participate in two of three different break-out sessions facilitated by Catherine Leggett; Bruce Adams, Director of the Office of Community Partnerships for Montgomery County; and Lynn Bradley, Director, Office of Government Relations of the American Library Association. A report summarizing LAC priorities and concerns raised to the MCLB was then presented. The meeting was then concluded following the presentation of the 2008 MCLB Achievement Awards.

Summary of "Best Practices" and suggested improvements

The Board/LAC meeting yielding the below list of best practices and suggested improvements with regards to LAC membership recruitment and retention, indicated as a top concern by the LACs. The list also includes ideas offered by LACs during the previous year in their presentations to the MCLB.

Library Staff involvement

- Library manager and staff need to be more aggressive/responsible for LAC recruiting
- Ask library staff to direct complaining patrons to LAC
- Better education of staff regarding volunteers
 - o Understand what activities in which volunteers can/can't participate
 - o NEVER tell potential volunteers they are not needed
 - o Feed all requests/leads through the volunteer center

Be more visible at the branches

- Create/display a LAC brochure
- Videotape or photograph LAC activities and create a video show or PowerPoint presentation of the photographs to be displayed in a rolling presentation in the libraries
- Prominently display LAC awards
- Flyers and signage can be generated and placed in conspicuous spots within the library and at large within the community (coffee shops, grocery store bulletin boards, community centers, etc)

Foster the concept of the library as a part of the community/neighborhood

- Partner with community groups
- Join Chamber of Commerce

- Tap into business community
- Participation in neighborhood parades and fairs
- Leverage neighbors (e.g. high schools) for recruiting and targeted programming
- Speak to home owners' associations or advertise in association newsletters
- Contact PTAs, which can lead to both adult and student involvement
- Include library information (including how to participate) in community welcome wagon material

Better utilization of library websites and electronic communications

- Interactive library branch websites or blogs
- Initiate discussion blogs regarding library services, events and collections.

Teen Outreach

- Create teen advisory groups
- Better publicize volunteer-opportunities-in-the library link on the Volunteer Center website
- Senior-teen tutoring
- More after-school programming
- Recruit children of LAC members
- Go to the schools (e.g., school librarians, media center directors)
- Hold technology petting zoo

Better/more programming

- Engage/draw in various "special interest" sectors of the community (e.g., nationalities, ethnicities, languages, hobbies) populations through programming
- Use "design your own program" approach with young parents who may have limited time/hours available. Explain that programs won't happen without community involvement.
- Use of free food to increase attendance

Make good use of media

- Gazette or other traditional media
- Send out description of volunteer needs to organizations that may be used in their enewsletters.

Make it easier and more fun to volunteer

- Allow parents to bring children to meetings (with or without babysitting service)
- Phone or web-meetings
- Meet in evening rather than during workday
- Don't ask for the moon; instead clearly describe to volunteers what is needed in discrete bite-sized chunks
- Hold dinner meetings (with social element)
- Institute/encourage LAC mentoring

Use networks

- Have members who are in minority groups ask others who are in those groups
- Reach out to library user groups (e.g., book discussions, children's programs)
- Ask friends to ask their friends to join/assist
- Ask people in the community who are already active in other organizations

Hook people by using library "issues" (e.g., development of new facilities, changes in library management, etc.)

Go on field trips (e.g., to libraries outside of Montgomery County)

Recap of LAC Priorities and Concerns

Please refer to Addendum A for a full copy of the "Library Advisory Committee Concerns" report and analysis that was distributed at the meeting. In summary, this report analyzed information regarding LAC concerns and issues based on input to the Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB) from Winter 2007 through Spring 2008. Trends and correlations across the LAC inputs were highlighted, and highly prioritized concerns were identified. The top five concerns (in ranked order) according to LACs are: LAC Member Recruitment, Facility, Collection, Renovation and Personnel. Best practices and responses to these high priority issues, as well as examples of successful LAC influence and impact were summarized in an addendum to this report.

2008 MCLB Achievement Awards

The Montgomery County Library Board was proud to announce the winners of the 2008 Achievement Awards:

• **Renaissance Award** (presented to the LAC which emerged after a period of difficulty or transition)

Winner: <u>Disability Resource Center</u>

• Member(s) of the Year Award (presented to the outstanding member(s) of LACs for their work during the year)

Winner: <u>Erin Maddox (Damascus)</u>

Damascus

• **Library Board Liaison's Award** (presented to the individual(s) and their LACs who exemplify the ideal Liaison relationship)

Winner: <u>Lois Neuman (Disability Resource Center)</u> <u>Disability Resource Center</u>

Annual Board/LAC Meeting Feedback

Meeting attendees were encouraged to provide feedback to the MCLB with respect to the usefulness of the meeting through filling out a short survey (refer to Addendum B). Pie charts depicting responses from approximately 16 attendees are shown in Addendum C. In summary, the responses indicate favorable feedback, with "Break-out Session Topics" noted most frequently as something that could be improved upon in future meetings.

Acknowledgements

Many special thanks are deserved in association with the 2008 Annual Board/LAC meeting: LAC members Ann Tognetti and Steve Schmal for providing break-out session notes; Library Board Chair, Dr. Lois Neuman, for performing all of the heavy lifting associated with pulling off a successful first-of-its-kind meeting; Parker Hamilton, Director of Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL), for her responsiveness, leadership and encouragement; the County Council for their continued support of MCPL as well as the meeting space; and most importantly the LAC members for their enthusiastic participation in the meeting and their dedication to and advocacy for the public library system.

ADDENDUM A

Report and Analysis of Library Advisory Committee Concerns June 14, 2008

B. Krantz, Montgomery County Library Board

Purpose

Analyze and distill information regarding LAC concerns and issues based on input to the Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB) from Winter 2007 through Spring 2008; highlight trends and correlations across the inputs provided by LACs; and to identify highly prioritized concerns by the LAC as a whole. It is expected that this analysis will facilitate the crafting of a work plan to address and mitigate highly prioritized LAC concerns.

Executive Summary

Twenty-four (24) LACs provided input to the MCLB regarding a prioritized list of issues for their individual LAC. LACs were asked to rank a list of 20 potential concerns in order of importance. Based on the provided data, the data were combined and used to generate a ranked list of concerns based on all inputs. The results are displayed in Figure 1 below. The top four concerns according to the LACs are: LAC Member Recruitment, Facility, Collection and Renovation. Best practices and responses to these high priority issues, as well as examples of successful LAC influence and impact are summarized in an addendum to this report.

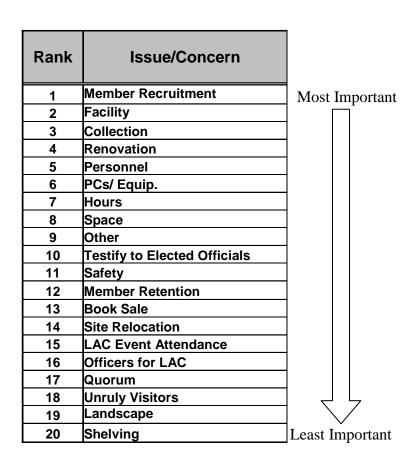


Figure 1: Summary of LAC ranked concerns

Data and Analysis

All inputs provided to the MCLB were used to generate the raw data table displayed below in Figure 2. For each LAC, the issues are ranked per their inputs. Numbers within the table cells indicate the ranking for that particular issue, with lower numbers having higher priority. Unranked issues are noted with a "99". For each LAC input, the cells are color coded per the quartile associated with their ranking according to the following scheme: red (1st quartile), yellow (2nd quartile), green (3rd quartile) and while (4th quartile). As shown in

Figure 2, LACs did not always provide a complete prioritized list and sometimes only ranked their top concerns. Also, some LACs grouped or combined several of the categories or assigned multiple issues with the same ranking. As such, some of the LAC data had to be interpreted or adjusted to be able to compare data across LACs; in each of these cases, a concerted effort was made to maintain the spirit of the LAC input.

Note that some of the twenty LAC issues may be grouped into overarching categories as shown in the top of the "Issue" row of

Figure 2. For instance, "Renovation", "Space" and "Site Relocation" all pertain to a common concern; depending on where a particular library is with respect to the County Capital Improvement Program (CIP), it is expected that one of the three issues would be of more concern.

About 25% of the LACs reported that "Other" was in the first quartile of their concerns (most important). These "write-in" issues were: board relations, volunteer involvement, community outreach, parking, library programs, funding and frustration.

LAC	Collection	Personnel	Hours	Facility	Shelving	Landscape	PCs/ Equip.	Space	Renovation	Site Relocation	Member Recruitment	Member Retention	Officers for LAC	Quorum	Event Attendance	Testifying to Officials	Safety	Unruly Visitors	Book Sale	Other
Damascus	3	5	6	11	16	12	4	2	1	15	3	13	14	17	8	7	9	18	10	99
Davis	6	1	2	99	99	99	99	99	3	99	5	99	99	99	99	99	4	99	7	99
Rockville	7	1	4	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	6	7	99	99	5	99	2	3	8	99
Silver Spring	2	7	5	3	99	9	4	99	8	1	6	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Wheaton	2	99	99	99	99	99	3	99	1	1	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	4	99
White Oak	5	7	2	9	8	13	14	10	3	16	1	1	1	1	15	11	4	12	6	99
Gaitherburg	4	99	99	1	99	99	99	3	1	2	99	99	99	99	99	5	99	99	99	99
Poolsville	5	99	1	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	3	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	4	2
Quince Orchard	2	99	99	99	99	99	99	1	99	99	3	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	4
Twinbrook	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	2	99	99	1	99	99	99	99	99	3
Germantown	99	1	4	3	99	99	99	99	99	99	2	99	99	99	99	6	99	5	99	99
Olney	4	9	10	3	8	12	5	2	1	19	6	14	13	18	16	17	7	15	11	99
Bethesda	1	99	99	2	99	99	99	99	99	99	4	99	99	99	99	99	3	99	99	99
Potomac	99	99	99	99	99	99	3	99	99	99	1	2	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Little Falls	99	99	99	1	99	99	99	99	99	99	3	99	99	99	99	4	2	99	5	99
Aspen Hill	99	99	99	3	99	99	4	1	2	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Corrections	8	2	10	12	11	19	4	14	18	17	3	7	9	16	5	1	6	13	15	99
Childrens																				
Resource	99	99	99	2	99	99	99	99	99	99	1	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	3
Collection																				
Kensington Park	7	4	19	1	15	2	8	10	3	17	5	6	12	18	14	11	9	13	16	20
Fairland	15	2	3	6	17	7	16	1	5	18	12	13	10	19	11	4	9	8	14	20
Long Branch	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	1	2	99	99	99	99	99	99	3	99
Noyes	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	1
Chevy Chase	10	12	13	14	8	15	11	9	7	17	3	4	5	6	2	1	16	18	19	20
Disability Resource Center	13	3	15	1	17	16	4	14	19	18	2	6	12	8	9	7	10	11	20	5

Figure 2: Raw LAC Input

A ranked list of the issues and concerns across all the LACs was generated by tabulating how many LACs rank a particular concern as being in the top quartile. (Please see Figure 3.) Indicated values are the percent of LACs that rank the issues in the associated quartile. For example, 38% of the LACs ranked issues concerning "Collection" as being in the first quartile (or in the top 5) of the list of issues. By sorting these percentages, one essentially achieves a ranked list of the issues across all LACs. This high-level result is shown in Figure 4.

Considering and correcting for the fact that some LAC issues are deemed to be correlated might lead to additional insight(s) regarding LAC concerns. After combining the relevant issues into larger categories (resulting in 12 concerns instead of 20), the above analysis was repeated. Figure 5 and Figure 6 show the results. Note that thirds were used instead of quartiles given that there are only 12 issues. Also note that the last two categories (board relations and funding) are as a result of "write-ins." If these issues were explicitly listed in the survey distributed by the Board, it is possible these issues could have been deemed as more important. Generating the same ranked summary of LAC concerns using this data set yields the list shown in Figure 7. The top-ranked categories are: LAC Membership/recruitment, Renovation/relocation, and Facility.

	Collection	Personnel	Hours	Facility	Shelving	Landscape	PCs/ Equip.	Space	Renovation	Site Relocation	Member Recruitmen	Member Retention	Officers for LAC	Quorum	Event Attendance	Testifying to Officials	Safety	Unruly Visitors	Book Sale	Other
1st Quartile	38%	33%	29%	42%	0%	4%	33%	25%	38%	13%	67%	17%	8%	8%	13%	21%	21%	8%	17%	25%
2nd Quartile	21%	13%	13%	8%	13%	8%	4%	13%	8%	0%	13%	17%	8%	8%	8%	13%	25%	4%	17%	0%
3rd Quartile	8%	4%	8%	13%	8%	17%	8%	8%	0%	4%	4%	13%	17%	0%	13%	8%	0%	21%	13%	0%
4th Quartile	33%	50%	50%	38%	79%	71%	54%	54%	54%	83%	17%	54%	67%	83%	67%	58%	54%	67%	54%	75%

Figure 3: LAC rankings by Quartile

Rank	Issue	% LACs Ranked as 1st Quartile
1	Member Recruitment	67%
2	Facility	42%
3	Collection	38%
4	Renovation	38%
5	Personnel	33%
6	PCs/ Equip.	33%
7	Hours	29%
8	Space	25%
9	Other	25%
10	Testify to Elected Officials	21%
11	Safety	21%
12	Member Retention	17%
13	Book Sale	17%
14	Site Relocation	13%
15	LAC Event Attendance	13%
16	Officers for LAC	8%
17	Quorum	8%
18	Unruly Visitors	8%
19	Landscape	4%
20	Shelving	0%

Figure 4: Ranked List of Issues across LACs

Issue	Collection	Personnel	Hours	Facility/Shelving/Land scaping	PCs/Equip.	Space/Renovation/ Relocation	LAC Membership/ Leadership	Event Attendance/ Outreach	Advocacy	Safety/ Security	Board Relations*	Funding*
Damascus	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	3	3	3	3	3
Davis	2	1	1	3	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	3
Rockville	2	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	3
Silver Spring	1	3	2	1	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	3
Wheaton	1	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3
White Oak	2	2	1	3	3	1	1	3	3	2	3	3
Gaitherburg	1	3	3	1	3	1	3	3	2	3	3	3
Poolsville	2	3	1	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	1	3
Quince Orchard	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	3	3	3
Twinbrook	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3
Germantown	3	1	2	1	3	3	1	3	2	2	3	3
Olney	1	3	3	1	2	1	2	3	3	2	3	3
Bethesda	1	3	3	1	3	3	2	3	3	1	3	3
Potomac	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	3	3	3	3	3
Little Falls	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	2	1	3	3
Aspen Hill	3	3	3	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3
Corrections	3	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	3
Children's Resource Collection	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3
Kensington Park	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	3
Fairland	3	1	1	2	3	1	3	3	2	2	3	3
Long Branch	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1
Noyes	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
Chevy Chase	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	3	3	3
DRC	3	1	3	1	2	3	1	2	2	3	3	3

Figure 5: LAC Inputs with collapsed categories and "write-ins" from "Other" issues

Issue	Collection	Personnel	Hours	Facility/Shelving/ Landscaping	PCs/Equip.	Space/Renovation/ Relocation	LAC Membership/ Leadership	Event Attendance/ Outreach	Advocacy	Safety/ Security	Board Relations*	Funding*
Top Third	29%	29%	21%	42%	13%	46%	54%	4%	8%	13%	4%	8%
Middle Third	25%	8%	13%	8%	25%	4%	25%	13%	21%	25%	0%	0%
Bottom Third	46%	63%	67%	50%	63%	50%	21%	83%	71%	63%	96%	92%

Figure 6: LAC rankings by thirds

Rank	Issue	% LACs Ranked as Top Third
1	LAC Membership/Leadership	54%
2	Space/Renovation/Relocation	46%
3	Facility/Shelving/Landscaping	42%
4	Collection	29%
5	Personnel	29%
6	Hours	21%
7	PCs/Equip.	13%
8	Safety/ Security	13%
9	Advocacy	8%
10	Funding*	8%
11	Event Attendance/Outreach	4%
12	Board Relations*	4%

Figure 7: Summary of LAC Concerns, collapsed categories

The top five priorities revealed by the analysis of LAC presentations to the Library Board, November 2007-May 2008 were recruitment, facilities, collection, renovation, and personnel. The following activities influenced decisions in each of these categories:

1. Recruitment (Other LACs also have brochures)

- Twinbrook LAC brochure at the checkout desk
- Quince Orchard brochure

2. Facilities

- Gaithersburg the increase in size in the library program of requirements
- Silver Spring involved in plans for the new library
- Germantown worked with the County to jumpstart new library project after it stalled
- Rockville involved with constructing the new library and now with recommending changes such as signage
- Rockville influenced free parking policy

3. Collection

- Gaithersburg identified issues that needed immediate attention and could not wait for the renovation due to changing demographics
- Long Branch identified the need for books at a higher reading level; influenced buying patterns

4. Renovation

- Gaithersburg involved in public hearings
- Olney advised on nicer, larger facility
- Chevy Chase influenced the new work on repairs: redesigned desk, the mini-renovation, and refurbishment of the young adult area. Considering installing a coffee bar.
- White Oak changed circulation desk
- Rockville working on signage

5. Personnel

• Everyone continues to work with staff

Best Practices for LACs in the Montgomery County Library System

The top five priorities revealed by the analysis of LAC presentations to the Library Board, November 2007-May 2008, were recruitment, facilities, collection, renovation, and personnel. The following activities demonstrate best practices recommended in each of these categories.

1. Recruitment

- Display brochures and bookmarks prominently at checkout counter and around the library
- Post dates of LAC meetings
- Display minutes of LAC meetings
- Hold a tea for potential LAC members for one week; offer refreshments, handout brochures, bookmarks
- Videotape or photograph LAC activities and create a video show or PowerPoint presentation of the photographs displayed in a rolling presentation in the library
- Prominently display LAC awards
- Branch managers assist in recruiting new members
- Advertise in local papers or realtor newsletters
- Flyers and signage can be generated and placed in conspicuous spots within the library and at large within the community (coffee shops, grocery store bulletin boards, community centers, etc)
- Recruit members at library events
- Reach out to community organizations and/or stakeholders
- Initiate discussion blogs regarding library services, events and collections
- Generate interest and engage younger patrons

2. Facilities

- Participate in the updating of Programs of Requirements for building renovations
- Give feedback to Branch Manager regarding building and grounds
- Advise Director; give input into the new Facilities Strategic Plan. Presently in place:
 - Earmarked funds to clear the grounds at all branches (work is completed at Kensington Park and Quince Orchard)
 - Earmarked \$545,000 for improvements in facilities and grounds

3. Collection

- Meet with staff; the new Manager of Collection and Technology Linda Mielke; and the new Collection Development Manager Kathy Meizner
- Be vocal and give ideas to Branch Managers
- Keep us informed via your MCLB liaison

4. Renovation

- Give input at public hearings for renovation and buildings, e.g. June 17 meeting on the Gaithersburg Library
- Participate in the design process
- Participate in the updating of the Program of Requirements

5. Personnel

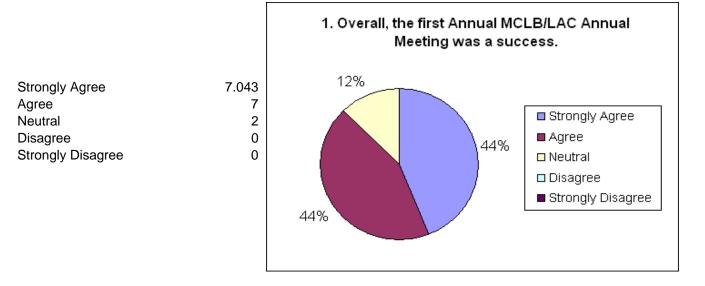
- Recognize that we must be in compliance with the union contract
- Recognize that staff will be transferred for the greater good of Montgomery County Public Libraries
- Recognize that the County directive limits only half of retirement positions can be filled under the Retirement Incentive Program

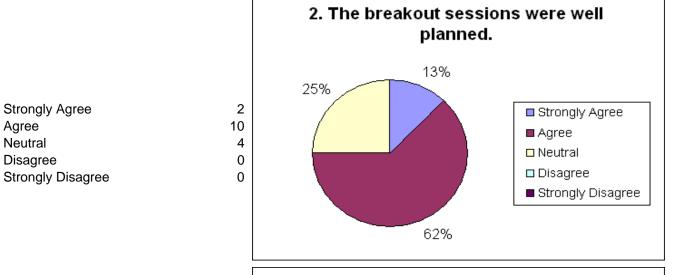
ADDENDUM B 2008 Annual Meeting Survey

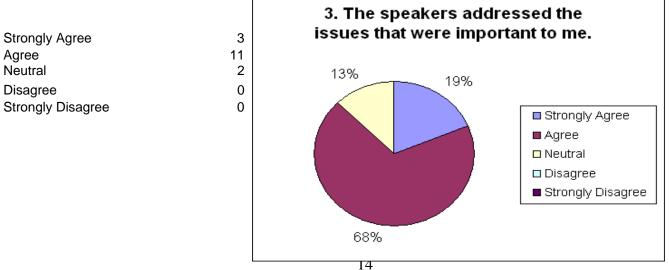
Hello!				
Thank you for attending the I We would like to hear your fe survey. Your opinion is very	eedback on this m			
Thank you!				
MCLB Members				
Questions:				
1. Overall, the first Annu	ual MCLB/LA	C Annual Meetin	ng was a success	·
Strongly Agree Agr	ree C	Neutral	Disagree	C Strongly Disagree
2. The breakout sessions	were well pla	nned.		
Strongly Agree Agr	ree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. The speakers addresse	ed the issues th	at were importa	nt to me.	
□ Strongly Agree □ Agr	ree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

	In your opinion, if anything, what can be improved? Please note that we have dressed the issue of having the breakout sessions in small rooms.
	Overall meeting format Day and time of the meeting Topics for breakout sessions Speakers for breakout sessions Facility Food
	Do you feel you had adequate time to network among other LAC members and ests?
0 0 0	Yes No I would have liked more time No Opinion

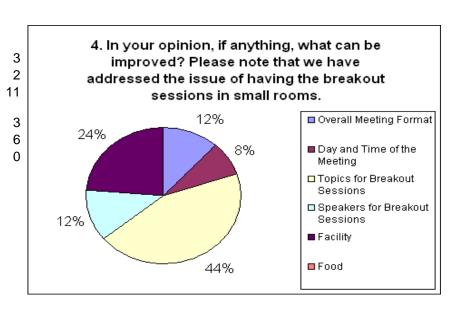
ADDENDUM C Survey Results







Overall Meeting Format
Day and Time of the Meeting
Topics for Breakout Sessions
Speakers for Breakout
Sessions
Facility
Food



Yes No I Would Have Liked More Time No Opinion

